

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Interview

On February 18, March 1, and March 8, 2004, telephone interviews were conducted between the Examiner and Masako Ando, Limited Recognition under 37 CFR §10.9(b). The Examiner is kindly thanked for granting these interviews. In the first interview on February 18, the Examiner indicated that the form of claim 9 was not proper and it should be rewritten into independent form such that the limitations are explicitly recited therein without referring to claim 1, and that such an amendment would also avoid §112 rejections to claim 9. However, the Examiner also indicated that such an independent claim would be subject to a restriction requirement if the amended claim did not include all of the limitations of claim 1. The second interview was conducted on March 1 and a proposed amendment to claim 9 was discussed. The proposed amendment to claim 9 in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion was submitted via facsimile on the same day after the interview. The third interview was conducted on March 8, 2004, in which the Examiner indicated that the proposed amendment would place the present application in condition for allowance if the amendment was formally filed with the Patent Office.

Regarding Amendments

Claim 9 has been amended into an independent form such that it includes all of the limitations of claim 1, as was shown in the proposed amendment discussed in the interview.

Request for Allowance

It is believed that this Amendment places the above-identified patent application into condition for allowance. Early favorable consideration of this Amendment and issuance of a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

If, in the opinion of the Examiner, an interview would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 50-1698.

Respectfully submitted,
THELEN REID & PRIEST, LLP

Dated: March 12, 2004



Masako Ando
Limited Recognition under 37 CFR §10.9(b)

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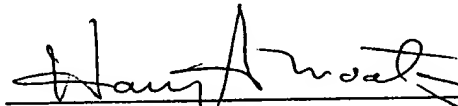
**BEFORE THE OFFICE OF ENROLLMENT AND DISCIPLINE
UNITED STATE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

LIMITED RECOGNITION UNDER 37 CFR § 10.9(b)

Masako Ando is hereby given limited recognition under 37 CFR § 10.9(b) as an employee of Thelen, Reid & Priest LLP to prepare and prosecute patent applications wherein the patent applicant is the client of Thelen, Reid & Priest LLP, and the attorney or agent of record in the applications is a registered practitioner who is a member of Thelen, Reid & Priest LLP. This limited recognition shall expire on the date appearing below, or when whichever of the following events first occurs prior to the date appearing below: (i) Masako Ando ceases to lawfully reside in the United States, (ii) Masako Ando's employment with Thelen, Reid & Priest LLP ceases or is terminated, or (iii) Masako Ando ceases to remain or reside in the United States on an H-1 visa.

This document constitutes proof of such recognition. The original of this document is on file in the Office of Enrollment and Discipline of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

Expires: August 27, 2004



Harry I. Moatz
Director of Enrollment and Discipline